

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
HOUSTON DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,	§	
Plaintiff,	§	
	§	
v.	§	CIVIL ACTION NO.
	§	
\$31,763.00 IN U.S. CURRENCY,	§	
Defendant.	§	

VERIFIED COMPLAINT FOR FORFEITURE IN REM

United States of America, Plaintiff, files this action for forfeiture against \$31,763.00 in United States currency and alleges the following:

Nature of the Action

1. This civil action in rem is being brought to enforce the civil forfeiture statute of 31 U.S.C. §5317(c)(2) which provides for the civil forfeiture of any property involved in a violation of 31 U.S.C. § 5316. Under 31 U.S.C.A. § 5316(a)(1)(A), a person shall report when they are about to transport more than \$10,000 in United States currency out of the United States. The United States currency involved in a violation of 31 U.S.C. §5316 is subject to civil forfeiture under 31 U.S.C. §5317(c)(2).

Jurisdiction and Venue

2. This Court has jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1355 because this is an

action for forfeiture under 31 U.S.C. §5317(c)(2), an Act of Congress.

3. Venue is proper in this Court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1355 and 1395 (a) and (b) because the acts or omissions giving rise to the forfeiture occurred in the Southern District of Texas, the property was found and is located in the Southern District of Texas, and this forfeiture action accrued in the Southern District of Texas.

Defendant in Rem

4. Defendant in rem is \$31,763.00 in United States currency that was seized at the George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston, Texas, from Pravinbhai Patel on December 16, 2007. Those funds are in the custody of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Houston, Texas.

Facts

5. On December 16, 2007, at the George Bush Intercontinental Airport, Houston, Texas, Pravinbhai Patel was boarding Continental Airlines flight #34 to London, United Kingdom. While Pravinbhai Patel was waiting to board his flight, a United States Customs and Border Protection Officer, (Customs Officer), asked Pravinbhai Patel whether he was transporting more than \$10,000 in cash. Mr. Patel said that he had \$1,000.00, and he signed a Customs and Border Protection form in which he stated that he was only transporting \$1,000.00. The Customs

Officer referred Mr. Patel to “secondary” for an additional examination.

6. During the additional examination, a Customs Officer located two envelopes in Mr. Patel’s carry-on bag. In each envelope was \$10,000 in U.S. currency. The officer also found in Mr. Patel right front jacket pocket an additional envelope with another \$10,000 in U.S. currency. An additional \$1,763.00 in U.S. currency was also found. In total the officer found \$31,763.00 in U.S. currency in Mr. Patel’s possession.

Relief Requested

7. The \$31,763.00 in U. S. currency was involved in a violation of 31 U.S.C. §5316 and is subject to civil forfeiture under 31 U.S.C. §5317(c)(2).

8. Therefore, Plaintiff requests:

- a. Arrest Warrants and summons, citing all persons having an interest in the defendant property to appear on the return day of process by filing a claim and answer pursuant to Rule G(5), Supplemental Rules for Certain Admiralty and Maritime Claims, or as ordered by this Court,
- b. A judgment of forfeiture, and
- c. Costs and other relief to which the Plaintiff may be entitled.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald J. DeGabrielle
United States Attorney

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VERIFICATION

I, Christopher White, Senior Special Agent, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, declare under penalty of perjury as provided by 28 U.S.C. §1746 that I have read this Verified Complaint for Forfeiture in Rem, and that the facts stated in the complaint are based upon my personal knowledge or from information obtained in the course of my investigation and are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Executed on February 20, 2008.



Christopher White, Senior Special Agent,
U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement